

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 018227
ORIGIN NODS-00

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DRAFTED BY AF/S:FGWISNER:SBA
APPROVED BY P;PCHABIB
AF;WESCHAUFLE
S/S-MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 018227

NODIS
TOVIP 17

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RH

SUBJECT:RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS

1. WE ARE CONTINUING OUR EFFORTS TO SALVAGE THE RHODESIAN NEGOTIATIONS. THE SECRETARY MET SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADOR BOTHA YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND TOLD HIM HOW CONCERNED WE WERE ABOUT THE POSITION IAN SMITH HAD TAKEN. THE SECRETARY ASKED HIM TO OBTAIN HIS GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ON HOW WE COULD PROCEED AND TOLD HIM WE COUNT ON SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT IN BRINGING SMITH BACK TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. BOTHA, WHO IS SEEKING REASSURANCE WE APPRECIATE WHAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAS DONE, REVIEWED SOUTH AFRICA'S ROLE IN BRINGING SMITH TO GENEVA IN THE FIRST PLACE. HE ASSURED THE SECRETARY HIS PRIME MINISTER HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED BY SMITH BEFORE SMITH MADE HIS SPEECH ON
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JANUARY 24. BOTHA INDICATED SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE PREPARED TO PLAY A HELPFUL ROLE NOW BUT VORSTER'S POSITION WAS COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT THE ORIGINAL FIVE POINT AGREEMENT HAD NEVER BEEN SERIOUSLY NEGOTIATED AND THE AFRICANS HAVE NOT COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO THE BRITISH PROPOSALS.

2. AFRICAN REACTIONS TO THE RHODESIAN IMPASSE HAVE BEEN

REASONABLY MODERATE. THE PRESIDENT HAS SENT LETTERS TO TFN AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE ASKING THEM TO GIVE DIPLOMACY A CHANCE.

WE HOPE THIS APPROACH WILL STEADY THE SITUATION IN AFRICA WHILE WE CONSIDER NEXT STEPS.

3. WE REMAIN IN CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE BRITISH. IVOR RICHARD, THE GENEVA CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN, HAS STATED PUBLICLY HIS VIEW THAT GENEVA COULD RECONVENE. AS A WARNING TO SMITH AND IN SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH POSITION, WE HAVE SAID TO THE PRESS TODAY THAT SMITH'S INTERNAL SOLUTION WHICH EXCLUDES IMPORTANT NATIONALIST LEADERS WILL NOT PRODUCE A SETTLEMENT AND DOES NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES. WE URGED ALL PARTIES CONSIDER THEIR POSITIONS CAREFULLY AND PURSUE A COURSE WHICH WILL PRODUCE A PEACEFUL OUTCOME.
VANCE

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